



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/682,988	11/05/2001	Bernd Gottselig	200-0798 DBK	4154
33481	7590	12/30/2003	EXAMINER	
DANIEL H. BLISS 2075 WEST BIG BEAVER ROAD SUITE 600 TROY, MI 48084			BORISSOV, IGOR N	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3629	

DATE MAILED: 12/30/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

09/682,988

Applicant(s)

GOTTSELIG ET AL.

Examiner

Igor Borissov

Art Unit

3629

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 03 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 October 2003.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) 1-18 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120**

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_\_ 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

**Claims 1-10 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fukatsu et al. (US 2002/0052666).**

Fukatsu et al. teach a method and system for providing product environment information, comprising:

**As per claims 1-9, 18:**

- inputting restricted substances and recycle content data of parts supplied by a product supplier into a computer system of a product manufacturer ([0007] – [0013]; [0038] – [0043]; [0056]; [0072]; [0075]);
- reviewing the inputted data and determining parts with banned or recycled content or substances over predetermined thresholds ([0040] – [0043]; [0056]; [0063]; [0072] – [0084]);
- reporting the determined parts to the supplier and product manufacture ([0038] – [0056]; [0063] – [0084]; [0085] – [0094]).

Fukatsu et al. do not specifically teach that the supplier of the supplied parts includes a supplier for a vehicle, and the product manufacturer is a vehicle manufacturer.

However, these differences are only found in the nonfunctional descriptive material and are not functionally involved in the steps recited. The “inputting” through “reporting” steps would be performed the same regardless of the type of the parts supplier or product manufacturer. Thus, this descriptive material will not distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art in terms of patentability, see *In re Gulack*, 703 F.2d 1381, 1385, 217 USPQ 401, 404 (Fed. Cir. 1983); *In re Lowry*, 32 F.3d 1579, 32 USPQ2d 1031 (Fed. Cir. 1994).

**As per claim 10**, said method and system, wherein said step of reviewing further comprises comparing the inputted data to a list of CAS numbers of substances with threshold content limits if there are no banned substances ([0058]; [0081] – [0082]).

**Claims 11-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fukatsu et al. in view of Farmer et al. (US 2003/0004965).**

**As per claims 11-17**, Fukatsu et al. teach all the limitations of claims 11-17, except for determining whether there are any substances with threshold content limits.

Farmer et al. teach a method and system for hazard communication system, comprising entering material information into the system; and processing entered information to determine materials with threshold content limits ([0010] - [0012]; [0030]; [0040]; [0057] – [0058]).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Fukatsu et al. to include determining whether there are

any substances with threshold content limits, because it would enhance the analytic process for determining the compliance with the environmental legislature.

### ***Response to Arguments***

Applicant's arguments filed 06/10/03 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

In response to applicant's argument that Fukatsu et al. fails to disclose "inputting restricted substances and recycle content data of parts supplied by a vehicle supplier into a computer system of a vehicle manufacturer", examiner points out that Fukatsu et al. does disclose inputting restricted substances and recycle content data of parts supplied by a product supplier into a computer system of a product manufacturer ([0007] – [0013]; [0038] – [0043]; [0056]; [0072]; [0075]). The specifics of the type of the product manufacturer shown in the claims does not result in a structural or functional difference with respect to the cited prior art, and, therefor, cannot be held to serve as a limitation on the claim. See: *In re Schreiber*, 44 USPQ2d 1429 (CAFC 1997).

Thus, a limitation on a claim can broadly be thought of then as its ability to make a meaningful contribution to the definition of the invention in a claim. In other words, language that is not functionally interrelated with the useful acts, structure, or properties of the claimed invention will not serve as a limitation. See: *In re Gulack*, 217 USPQ 401 (CAFC 1983), *Ex parte Carver*, 227 USPQ 465 (BdPatApp&Int 1985) and *In re Lowry*, 32 USPQ2d 1031 (CAFC 1994), and discussion above.

### ***Conclusion***

**THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication should be directed to Igor Borissov at telephone number (703) 305-4649.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 872-9306.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's Supervisor, John Weiss, can be reached at (703) 308- 2702.

Any response to this action should be mailed to:

***Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks***

***Washington D.C. 20231***

Application/Control Number: 09/682,988

Page 6

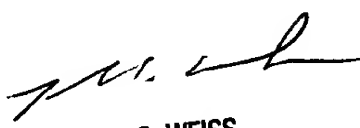
Art Unit: 3629

or faxed to:

**(703) 872-9306** [Official communications; including After Final  
communications labeled "Box AF"]

Hand delivered responses should be brought to Crystal Park 5, 2451 Crystal  
Drive, Arlington, VA, 7<sup>th</sup> floor receptionist.

JB

  
JOHN G. WEISS  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER  
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600